

CITY OF ROCKVILLE
Department of Recreation and Parks

March, 2008

Dear Parents,

A child in your family has expressed an interest in participating in the City of Rockville Department of Recreation and Parks Youth Track and Field Program. The staff welcomes you and your family to the program.

I. PURPOSE

To provide an opportunity for all Rockville youth to develop skills in Track and Field as well as sportsmanship through participation. We hope the Track and Field Program will offer each child the chance to reach his or her "personal best" as he/she makes friends, becomes physically fit, develops self-confidence, and acquires knowledge of the sport.

The program will attempt to instill the will to win and the courage to accept defeat and disappointment, with emphasis on clean play and sportsmanlike conduct at all times.

II. GENERAL LEAGUE ORGANIZATION

The program is coached entirely by volunteers. **Adult supervision** is the most important factor contributing to the success and enjoyment of the program. If you are available, please let the coach know, even if you have no experience in track. Each team is comprised of five different age groups so a number of people are needed to organize the members of the group.

III. SCHEDULE OF PLAY

Meets will be held on Wednesday evenings at Rockville/Wootton H.S. Regular season meets begin April 30 and continue for four weeks concluding with a conference meet tentatively scheduled for May 28th and 29th. Field events (softball throw, broad jump, and long jump) are conducted at same time as track events. Your coach will have a complete order of events.

In case of rain, please bear with us. In most cases, we will attempt to hold the meet. If the meet is cancelled, it will be done at the track, unless the weather is so severe during the day, that a decision can be made early to cancel. If cancelled, the meet may be held on the following Sunday at 1:00 p.m. All coaches would be notified by the Sports Office confirming the rescheduled meet.

IV. TRACK ETIQUETTE

In an attempt to alleviate confusion, we must enforce the following:

- * All participants must stay in the lower stands and off the track and infield unless involved in an event.
- * All participants must return directly to the lower stands after competing.
- * All participants must look both ways before stepping onto the track to cross since runners may be running. Be considerate.
- * All participants must enter and leave the track at the open gates. Climbing over the fence is not allowed.)
- * Team members are not allowed to run along the grass in the infield encouraging a participant. There are timers and judges who must be able to see.
- * Team members are not allowed at the finish line.
- * Runners must stay in their assigned lanes while running unless otherwise instructed by the starter. (When finished, runners should report to the timer for their time.)
- * Team members are not allowed around the scorer unless they need first aid
- * All participants/spectators will not be permitted on the upper stand area because of safety issues.

V. PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Recreation and Parks Department, coaches, officials, and especially the players need your support and understanding during meets. Fans and spectators can be the greatest asset or the greatest detriment to a program. Many parents enjoy watching their children compete in sports. Sometimes this involvement produces intense and anxious moments and the parents behavior becomes embarrassing to other parents, officials, and more importantly, to their own children. Parents are encouraged to watch their children participate, provided their behavior meets acceptable standards such as the following:

- * Parents should stand or remain seated in their team's spectator area during the contest.
- * Parents should not yell instructions or criticisms to the children.
- * Parents should make no derogatory comments to players, coaches, or parents about the opposing team or officials.
- * Parents must not interfere with their child's coach. They must be willing to relinquish the responsibility for their child to the coach for the period of the contest.

Responsibility of Coach: To control his/her own behavior and that of any assistant(s) and spectators. No coach or spectator may enter field without track commissioner's permission.

Parents will be required to read and sign a "Parents' Code of Ethics" which has been developed and prepared by the National Youth Sports Coaches Association. These signed pledges should be returned to your child's coach.

The guiding principle for parents is that nothing in their behavior should detract from any child's enjoyment of the sport. Remember, as parents, you have a good opportunity to teach sportsmanship. Kids will imitate not only what you say, but what you do.

While parents must not interfere with their child's coach during the ordinary course of meets and practices, parents continue to have primary responsibility for their child. You are expected to get your child to each practice and meet on time, and to pick up your child promptly after each session. Please do not allow your children to be transported in an open pick-up truck for safety reasons. Parents are strongly encouraged to stay and observe their child and to assist the coach, if asked. We also ask that parents not leave their children unattended.

All coaches this year have participated in a coaches' training program. National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA), a coaches' certification program, gives instruction on psychology of coaching youth sports, how to improve performance through proper conditioning, first aid, and a variety of techniques for organizing practices. NYSCA and we have established a code of ethics for coaches which requires them to act in a sportsmanlike and fair way towards opponents and officials. Coaches are constantly being observed and evaluated for conformance with the code of ethics.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter. Each child is important! Through programs such as the Rockville Youth Track and Field Program, children have the opportunity to experience teamwork and participation in a sport and come to know their teammates and opponents as people.

We hope that you, as parents, will accentuate the positive. Research has shown that children who have positive reinforcement have high self-esteem at the end of the season, and tend to reflect on the program as one filled with fun and enjoyment.

Sincerely,

Lou Clark
Sports Specialist